



## North Carolina 911 Board Policy & Procedures For Grant Programs

### Executive Summary

**This document contains information about the rules and requirements governing the PSAP Grant Programs, the types of projects eligible for funding, and general instructions for completing and submitting a grant application. All Grant awards shall be determined by the 911 Board, and shall be subject to terms of a contract established by the Board.**

The Grant Programs are established pursuant to §62A-47 of the General Statutes of North Carolina. The primary purpose of these Programs is to financially assist eligible PSAPs in rural and high cost-areas of North Carolina. The 911 Board may transfer funds annually to fund the Grant Programs from excess CMRS Provider funds pursuant to §62A-45; and may seek additional funding for the Programs. When funds are available for Program Grants, the Board will publish a notice of grant availability by means of the Board's website and by notice at a meeting of the Board. Grant applications will be available electronically, and the Board anticipates that applications may be filed electronically and by written submission.

The Board cannot guarantee grant funding to sustain multi-year projects.

The chairperson of the North Carolina 911 Board will make appointments from the 911 Board to the PSAP Grant Committee. The Grant Committee may recommend funding priorities, as well as any changes to the existing grant guidelines or administration of the grant program to the Board. The Board may amend, alter, or change policies or rules, as well as require the Grant Committee to undertake additional responsibilities not already specified in the guidelines.

Two programs are established for grant funds. These are the **E-911 Continuity and Consolidation Program** and the **E-911 Enhancement Program**. The purpose of the **Continuity and Consolidation Program** is to provide funding to primary PSAPs for projects designed to replace or upgrade E-911 equipment and services that are out of service, without vendor support, technically outdated, or can no longer perform at an established minimum functional standard to sustain an acceptable level of service to the public. The purpose of the **Enhancement Program** is to provide funding to primary PSAPs for projects designed to strengthen, broaden or increase the current E-911 operations through equipment, PSAP staff development, or service beyond that PSAP's current capabilities.

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## **Introduction**

### *What are the PSAP Grant Programs?*

The PSAP Grant Programs provide financial assistance for North Carolina primary PSAPs in rural and other high-cost areas based on demonstrated need. Funding for the Programs may be available through the North Carolina 911 Board (the “Board”) to support E-911. The Programs’ primary goal is support the continuity and enhancement of E-911, including PSAP consolidation projects.

### *Grant Committee*

The chairperson of the Board will make appointments to the Grant Committee from the 911 Board for the PSAP Grant Program

Each year, in anticipation of the upcoming grant cycle, the Grant Committee may recommend the grant funding priorities for the continuity and enhancement of E-911 equipment and services to the Board. Also in anticipation of the upcoming grant cycle, the Grant Committee may make recommendations to the Board regarding the creation and/or modification of previously established policies or rules for the Programs, the development of any criteria for awarding grants, and the proposal of any necessary changes to the administration of the PSAP Grant Programs.

## **Definitions**

The definitions stated in § 62A-40 will apply in addition to the following:

Consolidation – combining two or more primary PSAPs into a single primary PSAP with an integrated management structure that serves the same populations and jurisdictions previously served by such independent primary PSAPs.

Consolidation Project – means a project that meets the narrow criteria of “consolidation”.

Regional Initiative – are regional approaches aimed at consolidating the components that support E-911, such as shared equipment, shared resources, and/or the co-location of technology, and such Initiatives comprise projects involving two or more primary PSAPS representing no less than two municipalities, two counties, or a combination of at least one municipality and one county. A regional initiative can also comprise a single primary PSAP that serves multiple counties or cities. Regional initiatives can include projects from the Continuity and Consolidation Program, the Enhancement Program, or both.

Eligible Primary PSAP - in compliance with §62A-40 et. seq.

## Eligibility

Any North Carolina primary PSAP in compliance with §62A-40 et. seq. is eligible to apply for and receive a Grant. Additional consideration will be given to new primary PSAP projects that are not currently being supported by a local, state or federal grant and to primary PSAPs that can demonstrate financial need. In order for a funding request from a primary PSAP to be considered, the PSAP must have already submitted any required true-up for the previous Fiscal Year by the application deadline.

Grant funds may be used only to supplement the portion of local governments' budgets that pertain to PSAPs, not replace any funds which would have been budgeted for the grant-funded purpose in the absence of the grant. Grantees cannot replace general funds that have been allocated for a specific PSAP project with grant funds awarded for the same project in the same fiscal year.

Any grant funds awarded to PSAPs under this section are in addition to any funds reimbursed under §62A-46.

## Grant Period

The term of all grant contracts will be established and approved at the awarding of the grant. Extensions of contract terms may be approved in the Board's discretion.

## Multi-Year Funding

Transfers of funds to the Grant Programs may be made annually pursuant to G.S. §62A-45. Therefore, grant funding cannot be guaranteed to sustain multi-year projects.

## How to Apply/Deadline

The entire grant application package is accessible from North Carolina 911 Board's website ([www.nc911.net](http://www.nc911.net)). This grant application has been designed with built-in "help screens" and "drop-down menus" to assist applicants with the application process. The application can be saved and retrieved as many times as needed during completion.

The system will not accept incomplete applications and will alert an applicant if required information is missing. **However, once an application has been submitted, it cannot be changed without the intervention of the NC 911 Board.** After submission, an automatic e-mail acknowledgement of application receipt will be sent to the e-mail address listed for each project contained in the grant application.

All funding requests must be submitted using the grant application on the North Carolina 911 Board's website. In addition to the help, technical assistance is available from North Carolina 911 Board staff throughout the grant process.

## **Funding Guidelines**

### **Grant Cycle**

The Board will accept grant applications each year. North Carolina 911 Board staff will review grant applications for completeness and accuracy and forward applications to the Grant Committee. The Grant Committee will make funding recommendations to the Board. The Board will review and approve applications. Final approval is at the discretion of the Board. The Board will notify applicants by an electronic grant award notification. Grant awards to the applicants will be made after July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Applicants receiving funding will be required to report financial and programmatic information and data to close out their grant. The reporting schedule will be determined by staff at the time of the grant award. Also, applicants will complete a financial report to demonstrate that they have expended grant funds by providing invoices.

Failure on the part of the applicant to perform as required by any grant contract shall result in the withholding of future grant funding. The Board shall examine the grant funding received by all recipients to ensure that it was utilized in accordance with the grant requirements. If it is determined that the funding was misused, then the North Carolina 911 Board can take appropriate action to the extent permitted by law.

### **Regional Initiatives**

Any eligible applicant may act as a “host applicant” in a funding request for a regional initiative. Regional initiatives require that one eligible applicant act as the “host” for the initiative. The “host” will be the fiscal agent responsible for fulfilling all grant requirements such as reports, control of and accounting for funds, and distribution and control of equipment purchased with the grant award. All jurisdictions participating in a regional initiative must be identified in the grant application. An agreement authorized by each participating PSAP must be provided to the Board.

Regional initiatives among PSAPs are encouraged. To the extent appropriate, applicants should address the following items in the grant application: the relationship of the initiative to the participating PSAPs, intended collaborative efforts, the geographic area that will be served by the initiative, sources of funding, budgetary commitments of the participating PSAPs, physical and personnel resource sharing, and how the initiative impacts the operational or strategic plans of the participating PSAPs.

### **Consolidation Projects**

A Consolidation Project is a specialized grant type requiring additional grant funding and a longer grant period than would ordinarily be available for an individual primary PSAP request or a regional initiative. Grant funding for a PSAP consolidation project is a one-time only grant. In addition, the applicant receiving funding for a consolidation project cannot apply for funding as a regional initiative during the consolidation project.

Applicants interested in obtaining grant funding for a consolidation project must satisfy two prerequisites before submitting a grant request. These prerequisites are demonstrated local commitment and feasibility. First, the localities that govern the PSAPs involved in this consolidation must sign a Statement of Intent in support of consolidation. Second, a feasibility study must be completed that provides answers to the following questions: How would a consolidation take place and provide improved service; How should it be organized and staffed; What services should it perform; How should policies be made and changed; How should it be funded; and, What communication changes or improvements should be made in order to better support operations. This feasibility study must be completed with local funds; grant funds may not be used to pay for the feasibility study.911 Board staff assistance will be available, if necessary.

Similar to a regional initiative, one of the primary PSAPs participating in the consolidation project must act as the “host applicant” in a funding request. The “host” will be the fiscal agent responsible for fulfilling all grant requirements such as reports, control of and accounting for funds, and distribution and control of equipment purchased with the grant award. All jurisdictions participating in a consolidation project must be identified in the grant application. An agreement authorized by each participating PSAP must be provided to the Board. If a grant award is made, a detailed scope of work must be submitted for the entire project as well as a supporting budget that includes both grant and local funding.

### Statement of Need

Each funding request must include a Statement of Need that the project is attempting to address. This statement should reference the relationship to the current funding priorities established by the Grant Committee and include evidence of any financial need. Documentation of need shall be established with facts and quantifiable data. The Statement of Need section in the grant application requires applicants to address the relationship of the following items to their projects:

- identification of funding priorities;
- impact on operational services;
- consequences of not receiving funding;
- inclusion of project in a long-term or a strategic plan;
- likelihood of completing project without grant funding;
- availability of other funding source for project;
- percentage of grant funding request to total project costs; and
- local sustainability.

### Comprehensive Project Description

Applicants seeking funding for their E-911 projects must provide a thorough, concise, and complete description in the Comprehensive Project Description section on the grant application. At a minimum, this description shall outline goals and objectives, provide an implementation strategy and work plan, list the activities to be accomplished, include a timeline, and identify the longevity or sustainability of the project.

In addition, depending on the grant project, applicants should provide more information such as: the interface or compatibility between existing equipment and/or software and that which you intend to purchase; the overall relationship of your project to established long-range future technologies plans; and, how the equipment purchased will support future technologies for PSAP readiness.

Certain projects, such as GIS, shall require data sharing with the State of North Carolina, as well as other PSAPs, when appropriate. This, and other, requirements will be stated in the grant application and award.

### Budget and Budget Narrative

Each funding request must include a budget for the total amount requested. In the Budget section of the grant application, list the planned expenditures to be made with grant funds. Each request must state how the applicant will follow applicable procurement law, rules and policies. The applicant should also explain how those constraints impact their application. In lieu of a line item breakdown, an itemized cost schedule or detailed vendor prepared quote may be submitted as an attachment.

Please note, that individual PSAP or regional initiative funding may include costs, including extended warranty and maintenance costs up to five years after the implementation, upgrade, or replacement.

In addition to providing a budget, applicants shall provide a corresponding narrative in the Budget Narrative section of the grant application that briefly explains the reason for each requested budget item and provides the basis for its cost. All items requested must be thoroughly justified and clearly related to the proposed project.

If this project will have ongoing expenses, such as monthly recurring charges, describe plans and specific sources for future/long-term funding within the Budget Narrative section. Applicants shall also demonstrate how the project will be sustained in the future without additional 911 Grant Program funding.

### Evaluation

Each proposal must include an evaluation plan to measure the success of the grant. Applicants should identify the short-term, intermediate, and/or long-term outcomes, the measures used to determine outcomes, how data will be collected and evaluations conducted, and how data will be presented. A final evaluation will be a part of the final report.



### Review Process

The Grant Committee will evaluate all complete and eligible applications based on the substance of the application relative to the established funding tiers and priorities and make funding recommendations. In addition to funding priorities, the Grant Committee will evaluate applications based on what is contained in the application, the relationship to the statewide E-911 plan, whether or not funding was received in the last grant cycle, sustainability, demonstrated financial need, and criticality, as well as other criteria developed by the Grant Committee and identified in conjunction with the announcement of the grant application period.

## **E-911 CONTINUITY AND CONSOLIDATION PROGRAM**

### Purpose

This Program is for projects designed to replace or upgrade E-911 equipment and services that are out of service, without vendor support, technically outdated, or can no longer perform at an established minimum functional standard to sustain an acceptable level of service to the public.

### Funding Allocation

Allocations will be determined by the Board based on priorities established and grant applications received.

### Program Concept

Grant funds may be requested for, but are not limited to the following E-911 equipment and services: customer premise equipment (CPE); mapping display systems and related GIS services; voice recorders and logging systems; integrated 911 call processing systems; and, internal network improvements that support E-911 equipment and services.

### Goals and Objectives

Applicants that submit funding requests for projects shall include goals and objectives relevant to the purchase of equipment and/or services that support the continuity of E-911 and the identified need described in the grant application.

### Implementation

Applicants shall describe in the Comprehensive Project Description section of the grant application the goals and objectives, an implementation strategy and work plan, the activities to be accomplished, a timeline, and the longevity or sustainability of the project.

### Outcomes/Evaluation

Applicants' final report shall include an evaluation demonstrating that the equipment or services funded by the grant have been purchased, installed/implemented, and are performing as expected.

## **E-911 ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**

### **Purpose**

This Program is for projects designed to strengthen, broaden or increase the current E-911 operations through equipment, PSAP staff development, or service beyond that PSAP's current capabilities. And, when a PSAP's fiscal limitations have, or will, effectively preclude adherence to the state 911 plan.

### **Funding Allocation**

Allocations will be determined by the Board based on priorities established and grant applications received.

### **Program Concept**

Grant funds may be requested, but are not limited to the following initiatives: training of PSAP personnel; future technologies beneficial to E-911; and business continuity, disaster planning and redundancy planning and technology.

### **Goals and Objectives**

Applicants that submit funding requests for projects shall include goals and objectives relevant to the purchase of equipment and/or services that support the enhancement of E-911 and the identified need described in the grant application.

### **Implementation**

Applicants shall describe in the Comprehensive Project Description section of the grant application the goals and objectives, an implementation strategy and work plan, the activities to be accomplished, a timeline, and the longevity or sustainability of the project.

### **Outcomes/Evaluation**

Applicants shall describe in the Evaluation Plan section of the grant application an evaluation plan that demonstrates that the equipment or services listed on the grant application have been purchased, installed/implemented, and are performing as expected. In many cases, this can be achieved with a brief statement.